

REMARKS

The Applicant respectfully requests entry of the above amendment and reconsideration in view of the amendment and the following remarks.

Regarding the rejections of the claims, applicant respectfully traverses the assertions in the previous office actions.

In response to the rejection of claims 1, 3-6, 9 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), for allegedly being unpatentable over GB 2296811 to Shindo, the differences between the claims and the citation are such that the subject matter as a whole would not have been obvious at the time the invention was made, to those of ordinary skill in the art.

More specifically with regard to claim 1, the citation does not suggest "the play position is along the loading path between the eject position and the loading position," as in claim 1. Claims 3-6, 9 and 11 are dependent on claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Applicant specifically traverses the statement that in Shinto "it is unclear as to whether or not the tray 12 can rotate directly to the player or has to go through the loading position". In Shinto from page 7 line 33 to page 8 line 14 it is clear that the tray is rotated counterclockwise into the access position and that the tray is rotated clockwise into the reader. Thus in view of figure 2 of Shinto, the only way that Shinto discloses for the tray to move from the access position to the playing position is clockwise through the loading position.

The citation teaches away from the invention because the citation states that it is a "drawback of many present multiple

disc handling systems [is] that the user is unable to insert or remove a disc from the handling system while another disc is being read by the system." The invention of the present applicants requires that the playing position be along the loading path between the eject position and the loading position so that the user is unable to insert or remove a disc from the handling system while another disc is being read.

The proposed modification of Shinto can not be obvious because the modification would defeat the purpose of the citation. The purpose of Shinto on page 2, lines 4-8, is to "allows the user to insert or remove a disc from among those stored in the handling system without interrupting any disc then being read by the system".

Furthermore, with respect to claim 4, Shinto does not suggest that "the playing position is disposed on the loading path". In Shinto figure 4, the CD PLAY position is clearly above the CD open position, which is the end of the path between the loading position and the playing position.

Also with respect to claim 5, Shinto does not suggest a "first guide includes a groove" and does not suggest a "rotationally drivable first transport wheel" as in claim 5.

There is no suggestion in the combination of citations to combine the citations.

In response to the rejection of claims 7-8 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), for allegedly being unpatentable over GB 2296811 to Shindo, in view of GB 0391424 to Umesaki, the differences between the claims and the combination of citations are such that the subject matter as a whole would not have been obvious at the time the invention was made, to those of ordinary skill in the art.

More specifically with regard to claims 7-8 and 12 the combination does not suggest "the play position is along the loading path between the eject position and the loading position," as in claim 1, as discussed above, on which all of claims 7-8 and 12 depend.

In addition with regard to claims 7 and 8, the combination of citations does not suggest "the first guide includes a groove" as in claim 6 on which both claims 7 and 8 depend.

In addition, with regard to claim 7, the combination does not suggest "a fourth guide for the disc edge with a groove" as in claim 7. The citations alone or in combination do not suggest a groove in the guide for the disc edge. Claim 8 is dependent on claim 7 and is allowable for at least this same reason.

In addition, with regard to claim 7, the combination does not suggest "in the play position the first, second, third and fourth guides are pivoted away from the disc edge" as in claim 7. There is nothing in the citations suggesting to pivot away from the disc edge.

There is no suggestion in the combination of citations to combine the citations.

In response to the rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), for allegedly being unpatentable over GB 2296811 to Shindo, in view of US 5,508,994 to Nakamichi, the differences between the claims and the combination of citations are such that the subject matter as a whole would not have been obvious at the time the invention was made, to those of ordinary skill in the art.

More specifically the combination does not suggest "the play position is along the loading path between the eject

position and the loading position," as in claim 1, as discussed above, on which claim 10 depends.

In addition with regard to claim 10, the combination of citations does not suggest "the base plate and the laser mounting plate are coupled by means of dampers" as in claim 10.

There is no suggestion in the combination of citations to combine the citations.

In response to the rejection of claims 13-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), for allegedly being unpatentable over GB 2296811 to Shindo, in view of JP 6-131793 to Clarion, the differences between the claims and the combination of citations are such that the subject matter as a whole would not have been obvious at the time the invention was made, to those of ordinary skill in the art.

More specifically, with regard to claims 13-18, the combination does not suggest "the play position is along the loading path between the eject position and the loading position," as in claim 1, as discussed above, on which claims 13-18 depend.

There is no suggestion in the combination of citations to combine the citations.

The claims are definite and distinguished from the citations and Applicant respectfully requests the allowance of all claims.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to credit any overpayment or charge any fee (except the issue fee) including fees for any required extension of time, to Account No. 14-1270.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

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APPENDIX - Mark-Up Of Amended Portions Of The Specification

1. (thrice amended) A changer apparatus for information discs, comprising:

a stacking unit for stacking at least two information discs in respective stacking positions₇;

a read/write unit for reading information stored on the information discs and/or writing information on the information discs in a play position₇;

an eject position at which an information disc can be removed from the apparatus₇; and

transport means for transporting the information discs from the eject position into a loading position ~~of the stacking unit~~ along a curve-shaped loading path, the loading position being a position for loading discs from the loading path of the transport means into the stacking positions of the stacking unit;

and in which the play position is along the loading path between the eject position and the loading position.

5. (thrice amended) The ~~apparatus~~ transport means of Claim 4 1, ~~further comprising~~ including a first transport mechanism for transporting the information discs between the eject position, the play position and the loading position, and a second transport mechanism for transport of the information discs from the loading position into the stacking positions of the stacking unit, the first transport mechanism ~~being adapted to moves~~ the information discs in the loading plane and the second transport mechanism ~~being adapted to moves~~ the information discs in a

stacking direction oriented vertically with respect to the loading plane.

6. (thrice amended) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the first transport mechanism ~~comprises~~ includes at least a first and a second guide for the disc edge of the information disc, ~~which the first guide is grooved~~ includes a groove for supporting the disc moving along the loading path and ~~is~~ the first guide is movable in the loading plane, the second guide ~~comprising~~ includes at least one rotationally drivable first transport wheel for driving the disc to move along the loading path.

7. (thrice amended) The apparatus of Claim 6, wherein:

the first guide is a passive supporting guide₇;

~~there is provided~~ the first transport mechanism further includes: a third guide comprising for the disc edge and having a second transport wheel₇ for driving the disc to move along the loading path; and there is provided a passive supporting guide as a fourth guide₇ for the disc edge with a groove for supporting the disc moving along the loading path;

the first, the second, the third and the fourth guides include one or more ~~comprise~~ pivotal arms which are supported at one end and which are pivotable in the loading plane₇;

the first, the second, the third and the fourth guides are pre-loaded towards the curve-shaped loading path₇;

the first transport wheel ~~is essentially adapted to moves~~ the information discs between the eject position and a transfer position and the second transport wheel ~~is essentially adapted to moves~~ the information discs from the transfer position into the loading position.

9. (thrice amended) The apparatus of Claim 7₁, wherein a read/write unit is movably supported on a chassis plate of the apparatus.

10. (thrice amended) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the read/write unit ~~comprises~~ includes a base plate and a laser mounting plate, the base plate and the laser mounting plate are coupled by means of dampers, the base plate is slidably mounted on the chassis plate, and the laser mounting plate carries a ~~clamping device for clamping the information disc in the play position and~~ an optical unit for reading information stored on the information disc and a clamping device for clamping the information disc in the play position so that the read unit is isolated from vibrations of the chassis.

13. (thrice amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the stacking unit comprises at least two holder compartments for holding one information disc each_{7i}

the holder compartments are coupled to at least one threaded spindle and are movable into a vertical direction by rotation of the spindles_{7i}

there is provided an upper stacking zone and a lower stacking zone in the stacking unit for stacking the holder compartments_{7i}

the loading position is in a central zone between the upper and the lower stacking zone_{7i}

one of the holder compartments is each time movable into the loading position by rotation of the spindles, and the

transport means ~~are adapted to~~ move the information disc from the holder compartment, which is in the loading position, into the play position and into the eject position.